

From: Betty Whitaker
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/22/01 8:25am
Subject: Proposed Microsoft Settlement

I would like to comment on the proposed Microsoft settlement from my perspective as a U.S. citizen and a consumer. I am not a lawyer, so I have difficulty reading the legalese you asked that I read before submitting my comments, however I do know justice when I see it; and I do not see it in the proposed settlement. I do, however, know what I have seen happen over the last few years; and it is from this knowledge that I make my comments.

First, as a law abiding citizen I am outraged that although our court system has judged Microsoft to be a monopoly, the Department of Justice is effectively negating that judgement by not requiring Microsoft to quit the behavior for which I understand it was judged to be a monopoly. I don't know who is in whose pocket; but our courts are being made a mockery of by this proposed settlement. There is a clear distinction between an operating system and the programs that run on it. By bundling programs with their operating system, Microsoft is gaining a clear advantage over competitors to their programs just by having Microsoft's programs already installed on consumers computers. Many people will look no farther for programs just because they already have one installed. This gives Microsoft a clear advantage over companies with competing browsers, music players, office suites, etc. This is monopolistic behavior; and must be stopped to be an effective remedy. The only possible just remedy is to split Microsoft into two companies, the operating system and the programs that run on the operating system, both of which must compete for market share.

Second, as a consumer I am incensed that I will continue to be forced to pay for programs that I do not use just to purchase an operating system. Microsoft is not providing me with anything I want with their bundled programs. All they are doing is taking up space on my hard drive. I want to be able to determine for myself which programs I want to use for what; and I want to be sure that I get the best program for my money. That is becoming increasingly difficult for me to do. Remember the old adage "Jack of all trades, master of none."? That is what is happening to Microsoft today. Even their operating system is getting worse instead of better in some ways, bloated and a resource hog, with worse and worse security holes. Nobody can be all things to all people. I want the best buy for my money; and Microsoft's bundled programs are not the best that I can get. However, they will soon become all that I can get if Microsoft is not forced to compete for market share fairly. All I want from Microsoft is an operating system. Then if they make a better program to run on it I will buy their program, otherwise I will use a competitor's program. That is what I have been doing from the day I bought my first computer; and that is

what I want to continue to be allowed to do.

Thank you for reading my opinions on this matter.

Sincerely,
Betty Whitaker
whitak35@swbell.net